Mr. E. Roy Smith
Publisher
Gazette Telegraph
30 S. Prospect Street
Colorado Springs, CO 80901

June 13, 1992

Dear Mr. Smith,

I am writing in response to the full page ad Focus on the Family placed in the Gazette Telegraph on Friday, June 12. While I did not agree with the overall content, I certainly defend their right to place the ad and your right to publish it - with one exception.

Overall, the information presented is documented and a position is fairly stated. However, embedded in the copy is the following: "...reflects the homosexual agenda, which includes recruitment of the young ...". This undocumented phrasing is not only undocumentable, it is defamatory. The notion of a "homosexual agenda" is as ludicrous as that of a "heterosexual agenda". Neither is a political group; both groups are made up of individuals with many different goals and aspirations. Recruitment of the young may be the agenda of pedophiles, but to equate homosexuality with pedophilia is to reinforce false stereotypes and feed the flames of prejudice that are spreading in our community.

I am interested in knowing more about the guidelines you use in accepting or rejecting advertising. It is my understanding from my call to your advertising staff that this is the publisher's decision. Is it acceptable to print defamatory statements in the body of an ad? Could the Ku Klux Klan buy ad space and discuss "the black agenda" or "the Jewish agenda"? I firmly believe in freedom of speech, but I trust that the paper has some guidelines against maligning individuals and groups in the community. Please share these guidelines with me.

In closing, reading the GT used to be a family activity in our home. My husband and I now feel that we need to screen the paper for messages of prejudice that will be detrimental to the upbringing of our children. I believe that the publishing of this ad, with the homosexual slurs, was irresponsible on your part and hope that future ads will be more carefully considered.

Sincerely,

Amy Divine
4455 Chimney Rock Lane, Colorado Springs, CO 80904